

**DEER HERD UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
**Deer Herd Unit #23**  
**Monroe**  
**April 2006**

**BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

**Piute and Sevier counties** - Boundary begins at I-70 and US-89 north of Sigurd; south on US-89 to SR-24; south on SR-24 to SR-62; south and west on SR-62 to US-89; north on US-89 to I-70 near Sevier; north on I-70 to US-89 north of Sigurd.

**LAND OWNERSHIP****RANGE AREA AND APPROXIMATE OWNERSHIP**

	Year-long range		Summer Range		Winter Range	
Ownership	Area (acres)	%	Area (acres)	%	Area (acres)	%
Forest Service	0	??	112284	75%	43465	24%
Bureau of Land Management	0	??	8724	6%	99873	56%
Utah State Institutional Trust Lands	0	??	9942	7%	15034	9%
Native American Trust Lands	0	??	0	0%	640	0%
Private	0	??	18382	12%	15283	9%
Department of Defense	0	??	0	0%	0	0%
USFWS Refuge	0	??	0	0%	0	0%
National Parks	0	??	0	0%	0	0%
Utah State Parks	0	??	0	0%	0	0%
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources	0	??	0	0%	3753	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>??</b>	<b>149332</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>178048</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **UNIT MANAGEMENT GOALS**

Manage for a population of healthy animals capable of providing a broad range of recreational opportunities, including hunting and viewing. Balance deer herd impacts with human needs, such as private property rights, agricultural crops and local economies. Maintain the population at a level that is within the long-term capability of the available habitat to support.

## **POPULATION MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

- < Target Winter Herd Size - Achieve a target population size of 7,500 wintering deer (modeled number).
- < Herd Composition – Maintain a region wide three-year average postseason buck to doe ratio ranging from 15- 20 bucks per 100 does.

	<b>Objective from past plan (2001)</b>	<b>Long-term Objective</b>	<b>2006-2010 Objective</b>	<b>Change</b>
Monroe	7,500	7,500	7,500	0

## **POPULATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

### **Monitoring**

- < Population Size - Herd composition and population size will be monitored through post season and spring classification, hunter check stations, harvest surveys and computer modeling.
- < Buck Age Structure - Monitor age class structure of the buck population through the use of checking stations, postseason classification, uniform harvest surveys and field bag checks.
- < Harvest - The primary means of monitoring harvest will be through the statewide uniform harvest survey. Achieve the target population size by use of antlerless harvest using a variety of harvest methods and seasons. Recognize that buck harvest will be above or below what is expected due to climatic and productivity variables. Buck harvest strategies will be developed through the RAC and Wildlife Board process to achieve management objectives for buck: doe ratios.

### **Limiting Factors (May prevent achieving management objectives)**

- < Crop Depredation - Take all steps necessary to minimize depredation as prescribed by state law and DWR policy. Closely monitor Annabella and South Monroe agricultural areas.
- < Habitat - (winter/summer range conditions) Monitor and protect the Poverty Flat burn (reseeded November 1997) to restore critical winter range. Excessive habitat utilization will be addressed.
- < Predation - Refer to DWR predator management policy.
  - Assess need for control by species, geographic area and season of year.
  - Seek assistance from USDA/Wildlife Services when deer populations are depressed and where there is a reasonable chance of gaining some relief through a predator

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control effort. Concentrate USDA/Wildlife Services control efforts during and immediately prior to the fawning period.

- Recommend cougar harvest to benefit deer while maintaining the cougar as a valued resource in its own right.

- < Highway Mortality - Cooperate with the Utah Department of Transportation in construction of highway fences, passage structures and warning signs, etc.
- < Illegal Harvest - Specific preventive measures will be implemented through Action Plans developed in cooperation with the Law Enforcement section should illegal kill become an identified and significant source of mortality.
- < Interspecific competition - No limitation generated by elk/deer interactions has been documented.

### **HABITAT MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

- < Maintain and/or enhance forage production through direct range improvements throughout the unit on winter range to achieve population management objectives.
- < Work with private and federal agencies to maintain and protect critical and existing winter range from future losses.
- < Provide improved habitat security and escapement opportunities for deer.

**Condition of deer winter range on Unit 23, as indicated by DWR range trend surveys.**

Year	Mean DCI score for Unit	Classification	Unit-specific DCI score range: Poor	Unit-specific DCI score range: Fair	Unit-specific DCI score range: Good
1998	43	Fair	20-34	35-52	53-70
2003	35	Fair/Poor Threshold			

### **HABITAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

- < Continue to monitor the permanent range trend studies located throughout the seasonal ranges.
- < Monitoring - Range trend studies, pellet transects, annual spring range rides with agencies and the public.
- < Cooperate with land management agencies and private landowners to identify critical areas and work together to maintain and enhance deer habitat.
- < Work closely with Monroe Demonstration Steering Committee to obtain funding and coordinate habitat improvement projects.

### **PERMANENT RANGE TREND SUMMARIES**

#### **Unit 23, Monroe**

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There are currently 6 permanent range trend study transects on this unit. These are located in deer winter ranges identified by BLM, USFS and DWR personnel in 1985. The most recent trend data was collected in 2003. Currently all six sites show stable trends for soils, browse and herbaceous under stories.

DCI was down 20.0% from 1998 to 2003, likely as a result of severe drought conditions. Pinyon and juniper have increased by 10% on transects in this unit and several thousand of acres of critical deer winter range have recently been subjected to wildfires. Several of these areas are being invaded by cheat grass, a non-native species. Browse conditions on these burned areas have not yet recovered to the point where they are useful as deer winter range. However, favorable weather patterns in the last two years have increased the amount of feed available for big game in most areas. In addition, several vegetation treatments have been completed during the past five years in important deer habitats and more are in the planning stages. Deer herds are currently well below objective and are not expected to increase beyond the capacity of existing and treated winter ranges. Current and planned habitat improvement projects should result in higher DCI values in the near future. If this occurs, the short-term objective should be raised.

Summer range condition is probably not a limiting factor on this deer unit.

#### **Duration of Plan**

This unit management plan was approved by the Wildlife Board on \_\_\_\_\_ and will be in effect for five years from that date, or until amended.